

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 DHA-02
CU-02 EB-08 LAB-04 SIL-01 IO-13 /086 W
-----151257Z 038522 /50

R 151130Z MAR 77
FM AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4333
INFO AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN
AMEMBASSY CARACAS
AMEMBASSY KINGSTON
AMEMBASSY PARAMARIBO
AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN

C O N F I D E N T I A L GEORGETOWN 0525

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV, PINT, GY, SHUM
SUBJECT: CASE AGAINST OPPOSITION LEADERS DISMISSED

REF: A. GEORGETOWN 2281, B. GEORGETOWN 0444,
C. GEORGETOWN 0481

SUMMARY: CASE AGAINST THREE PROMINENT OPPOSITION LEADERS FOR
PUBLISHING NEWSSHEET DAYCLEAN IN VIOLATION OF LAW HAS BEEN
DISMISSED. CASE FORGED BROAD FRONT OF OPPOSITION GROUPS
CENTERED ON ISSUE OF FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION. DISMISSAL OF CASE
FITS INTO OVERALL GOG EFFORT TO IMPROVE HUMAN RIGHTS IMAGE.
END SUMMARY.

1. GOVERNMENT'S CASE AGAINST DISSIDENTS EUSI KWAYANA, THELMA
REECE, AND BRINDLEY BENN FOR ALLEGEDLY PUBLISHING DAYCLEAN
IN VIOLATION OF PUBLICATIONS AND NEWSPAPERS ACT (REF A) HAS
BEEN DISMISSED. MAGISTRATE WILLIAM ALEXANDER RULED THAT
PROSECUTION HAD NOT PRESENTED EVIDENCE TO PROVE THAT
BENN AND REECE WERE RESPONSIBLE FOR PUBLISHING DAYCLEAN,
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ORGAN OF BENN'S WORKING PEOPLE'S VANGUARD PARTY (WPVP).
JUDGE ANNOUNCED THAT STATE HAD DROPPED ITS CASE AGAINST
KWAYANA, BUT GAVE NO REASONS FOR THIS ACTION. CASE CAME
TO PROMINENCE WHEN DEFENDENTS WERE ARRESTED IN NOVEMBER
1976.

2. IN STATEMENT CONCERNING DISMISSAL OF CASE, REECE AND BENN

CITED SUPPORT OF GUYANESE MASSES, PEOPLE'S PROGRESSIVE PARTY (PPP), SUGAR AND BAUXITE WORKERS, DEMOCRATIC LAWYERS IN GUYANA AND CARIBBEAN, AND PROGRESSIVE GROUPS ABROAD AS INSTRUMENTAL IN THEIR VICTORY. STATEMENT STRESSED IMPORTANCE OF INTER-RACIAL UNITY IN STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM TO DISSENT. MIRROR RECALLED THAT POLICE ALLEGEDLY HAVE HARASSED PEACEFUL DEMONSTRATORS AND CATHOLIC STANDARD MAINTAINED THAT DISMISSAL OF CASE HIGHLIGHTED WIDESPREAD CONCERN OF GUYANESE AND MANY GROUPS THROUGHOUT CARIBBEAN FOR FREEDOM TO DISSENT AND FUNDAMENTAL RIGHT TO GIVE AND RECIEVE INFORMATION.

3. COMMENT: PROSECUTION OF KWAYANA, REECE, AND BENN BROUGHT TOGETHER A BROAD COALITION OF GROUPS OPPOSED TO GOVERNMENT CENTERED ON ISSUE OF FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION. OVER PAST THREE MONTHS, THIS CASE WAS CLOSELY LINKED TO A MORE GENERAL DEBATE OVER HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES WHICH DEVELOPED HERE. EMBASSY FEELS THAT TOGETHER WITH RECENT RATIFICATION OF THREE UN HUMAN RIGHTS CONVENTIONS AND DECISION TO CONDUCT SPEEDY AND FAIR TRIAL FOR PPP ACTIVIST RAMPERSAUD, DISMISSAL OF CASE FITS INTO OVERALL EFFORT, APPARENTLY DIRECTED BY MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND JUSTICE WILLS, TO CLEAN UP GOG HUMAN RIGHTS IMAGE AND UNDERCUT INTERNAL OPPOSITION (REFS B & C).

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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TAGS: PGOV, PINT, SHUM, GY, (KWAYANA, EUSI), (REECE, THELMA), (BENN, BRINDLEY),
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